



CDVSA Executive Director's Update

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April – June 2024

FY2024 Quarter 4

An update of CDVSA activities/highlights April 1-June 18, 2024

Staffing and personnel

Throughout this quarter, CDVSA continued recruitment efforts to fill our remaining vacant staff positions. As you may recall, last quarter we had a shift within our office, with several staff promoting up to higher-level positions that remained open from 2023. While this was a very positive change, it still left us with 7 of 11 positions vacant. Fast forward to now, and CDVSA is excited to announce that our recruitment efforts have been successful, with 10 out of 11 positions now filled!

As noted last quarter, Lisa Morley moved into the Criminal Justice Planner position and started her role on April 15th. Britten Niemi, our new Administrative Operations Manager, started her position on April 22nd. Not long after, we hired Anna Ramirez to fill the position of our Lead Grants Administrator 3, followed by Jennifer LaRoe who accepted the position of the Victim Services Program Coordinator 2. Both Ann and Jennifer began work with CDVSA on June 3rd. This leaves one remaining position open—our Battering Intervention Program Coordinator 2. With the whirlwind of recruitments over a very short period, we decided to pause a moment before putting the BIP position out for recruitment to allow time for staff to settle into their roles and to assess each person's workload and duties. For the interim, Lisa Morley will continue to work on this project to keep it moving forward until we are ready to hire, which we anticipate being late summer or early fall.

CDVSA has had many shifting and moving parts staffing-wise the past 5 months, and we are all very excited to re-align our office and resume operations with an almost-full, professional staff!



CDVSA Funding

To date, CDVSA has not been able to adjust our grant awards to allow for inflation. This means programs, many who have been funded at their “base” levels for years, are operating at a decrement as the cost of utilities, food, and supplies continue to escalate. Due to staff vacancies in SFY24, CDVSA had “excess” funds in our budget and proposed to distribute these to our sub-grantees to help offset some of these costs. On May 2, 2024, the CDVSA Board voted to approve the disbursement of approximately \$400,000 dollars to the agencies who elected to receive additional funds. We are thankful for the Board supporting this small yet helpful supplemental funding boost.

During this years’ legislative session, there were many bills and discussions related to improving CDVSA’s funding. After much deliberation, bills HB 116 and HB 119 failed to make it through the session. However, CDVSA did receive a 3.7 million general fund dollar increment added to our base for Victim Services. We are grateful money was added, though feel it imperative to note that this still does not allow any more than flat funding to our programs for the 7th year in a row. CDVSA will be funding programs at the same amount they received in FY24 per the Board vote on June 11, 2024. We are hopeful next year’s session may result in more solutions for our funding crisis.

CDVSA Priority Projects Update

- **Prevention**

This quarter, CDVSA continued to map out our Prevention Planning with attendance at the statewide Pathways for Prevention meeting held in Sitka, Alaska. We are beginning the strategic planning process for the next statewide plan and putting special focus on membership to make sure we have the leadership and representation to craft a solid, vibrant, actionable plan that meets the moment.

CDVSA is also considering how we can increase and improve ongoing messaging work with Walsh Sheppard moving forward. This spring, Walsh Shepard connected us with the opportunity to support the Native Youth Olympics, which targets many of our goals in one place! STAR and AWAIC, two of our Anchorage sub-grantees, partnered with us to staff the event in-person. We are looking forward to doing more targeted campaigns with them.



Looking ahead, we are beginning to prepare for the next Prevention Summit, which typically occurs in the winter. Due to COVID-19, the last in-person Summit was held in 2019. We are excited to once again be able to gather and share ideas and strategies related to prevention programming. CDVSA has been connecting with partners doing similar work to explore how the field is changing and opportunities for collaboration, which will be incorporated into the scope of the FY26-28 Prevention RFP.

- **New Approaches for Those Who Cause Harm**

CDVSA continues to receive multiple inquiries from communities wanting to implement DVIP programming, demonstrating the demand for alternatives as we simultaneously start the longer process of updating regulations and programming to establish statewide standards. While Lisa Morley has taken on the role of the Criminal Justice Planner, she continues to work on establishing a sound core for this project so that the new DVIP Program Coordinator may continue the work upon hire.

CDVSA is working with Rei Shimizu and Kathi Trawver from the UAA School of Social Work to develop training for behavioral health providers and others who are or wish to facilitate Domestic Violence Intervention Programs (DVIP). The UAA team met with CDVSA and stakeholders at the end of May to review the curriculum outline and will make revisions to ensure the training meets the needs of the intended target audience. CDVSA will continue its RSA with UAA in FY25 to include (1) development of a graduated curriculum guide for behavioral health professionals to better understand Alaska's needs for treatment, interventions, and programs for DV/IPV perpetrators with input from stakeholders, (2) support revision of DVIP regulations, (3) continue to explore options for using restorative Justice in cases of domestic violence, including hosting a Restorative Justice Symposium Spring 2025, and (4) provide technical assistance as needed. CDVSA is excited to continue gaining momentum on this area of work to create meaningful programming and standards that protect victim safety, increase accountability, and ultimately reduce the rates of those who commit these crimes.

- **New Data Management System**

- CDVSA Research Analyst 3 Catherine Mohn in partnership with ANDVSA continues to work on the implementation of the VELA cloud-based system with sub-grantees. Currently, almost all victim service sub-grantees are either entering data into the VELA database system, submitting reports into it, or have a timeline to be onboarded. We have also begun the next

phase of implementation in VELA with onboarding BIP / PBP data. Approximately half of the offender-based programs have already launched VELA with the goal of fully entering into the new system by the start of SFY25 quarter two. CDVSA has been hearing wonderful feedback from subgrantees about the new reporting system and is excited about this improvement to our data collection.

- **The OVC VOCA Center TA Clinic**

In June, CDVSA was fortunate to receive training on Department of Justice (DOJ) grant administration and management from the OVC VOCA Center. The OVC VOCA Center is a technical assistance provider that works with states to bring their policies and practices into compliance with federal grant requirements—specifically focused on VOCA and DOJ grant funds. Each staff member of the OVC VOCA Center has previously served as the VOCA Administer for a state administering agency, which brings an element of hands-on experience and knowledge of the challenges administering these funds. CDVSA was even more fortunate to have our trainers be VOCA Center Director Janelle Melohn and Deputy Director Kellie Rabenhorst, both who have extensive experience administering these funds. Both Janelle and Kellie traveled to Juneau to provide in-depth TA on site with all our staff members present.

Prior to the site visit, CDVSA submitted our current programmatic and financial monitoring practices to the Center for review. This was useful in that our trainers were able to analyze the current practices and assess for strengths and gaps and come prepared to assist us in any revisions and updates to be made. Additionally, it was extremely beneficial to have our entire staff, each with differing levels of experience (and few with DOJ grants specifically), be present to hear the same information and participate in the improvement process for our monitoring. ANDVSA Director Brenda Stanfill was also able to come meet with the VOCA Center staff to ask specific questions and seek clarification on practices in question from the sub-grantee perspective. It was great to have Brenda present for this information to help pass along to the ANDVSA member programs.

What we learned from this clinic is that CDVSA needs to update and increase our monitoring practices due to the high level of compliance and oversight DOJ grants require. Together with the OVC VOCA Center, CDVSA will be working to do so as we start our new fiscal year. While it is another project to tackle, we are grateful for a plan moving forward that will



ensure our fiduciary responsibilities are being fulfilled as a State Administering Agency for Alaska.

▪ **CDVSA Board Member Update and Scheduling of Meetings**

CDVSA now has 9 of its delegated 11 seats filled, with the addition of Ginger Baim of Wasilla appointed on May 24th. The 2 remaining vacant seats are also public member seats. During our Q3 meeting, Commissioner Jennifer Winkelman was elected as Board Chair and Laurel Schoop was elected to Vice Chair. I have been in discussion with both women and am excited for their enthusiasm and support in moving CDVSA forward.

At the Q3 meeting, the Council Board determined the need to participate in training on Board Development, ethics, review CDVSA by-laws, and discuss overarching goals to support the mission of CDVSA. Unfortunately, CDVSA did not receive enough Board members in time, resulting in our in-person meeting and Board development day being postponed until later in the year when we have a full Board. It is my hope that during this meeting we will be able to re-establish a date for this important piece, as well as set tentative dates for Board meetings for the remainder of FY25. Additionally, the Board will need to determine a rural outreach meeting location so that the hosting community may start planning for our visit. It will also need to be decided if we continue to visit a rural community in Q4 of FY25, or if the Board would like to do so earlier in the year due to the overlap with the funding decisions that occur in Q4.

To assist in determining which community you want to consider for the FY25 Rural Outreach meeting, listed below are the rural communities (definition = off-the-road system or on-the-road system with a population of 3,000 or less) we have never visited or have not visited since FY2014.

- Seward
- Emmonak
- Craig
- Unalaska
- Valdez
- Utqiagvik
- Hooper Bay (new grantee FY24)



Alaska's Council on
Domestic Violence
& Sexual Assault